

Adopted: March 24, 1944

File No. 3378-43

REPORT OF THE CIVIL AERONAUTICS BOARD
on the
Investigation of an Accident Involving Aircraft
During a Local Pleasure Flight

Eugene Leonard Wardzinski and his passenger, Stanley Raymond Thomas, were fatally injured in an accident which occurred near Lake County Airport, Willoughby, Ohio, at approximately 6:40 p.m. on August 1, 1943. Wardzinski held a private pilot certificate with a single-engine land, 80-135 h.p. rating. He had flown approximately 400 hours, around 100 of which were in the type of aircraft involved. Both boys were Naval aviation cadets and had completed their basic flight training with the Navy. They were home on furlough when the accident occurred. The aircraft, a Luscombe 4, NC 1344, owned by the pilot and A. J. Harn, was demolished.

Wardzinski, with Thomas as a passenger in the right seat, took off from the Lake County Airport about 6:30 p.m. on a local pleasure flight. Shortly thereafter a steep climbing turn was executed and the plane was then dived to a very low altitude over the field. Following the pull-up a wing-over was attempted at such a low altitude that the maneuver was not completed. The plane struck the ground with power on, at an angle of about 45°, and disintegrated as it slid forward. The main portion of the wreckage came to rest in an inverted position about 35 feet from spectators and parked cars.

Examination of the wreckage revealed no failure of any part of the aircraft prior to the accident and the manner in which the propeller was broken indicated that considerable power was being developed at the time of impact. Dual controls were installed and operative. Neither occupant wore a parachute.

Wardzinski, in an apparent attempt to demonstrate his flying skill, displayed very poor judgment and no regard for the safety of himself, his passenger, or persons on the ground.

The probable cause of this accident was reckless action of the pilot in performing acrobatic maneuvers at a dangerously low altitude.

BY THE BOARD

/s/ Fred A. Toombs
Secretary